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Educational Disadvantage: Effects on the Implementation of Multicultural Practices

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EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE: EFFECTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTICULTURAL PRACTICES

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Resumo

Apesar de desvantagem educacional ser um conceito bastante investigado, pouco se conhece acerca dos seus efeitos na implementação de práticas multiculturais por parte de profissionais. Desta forma, o presente estudo tem como intuito aprofundar o entendimento relativamente a este tópico, examinando se o nível de diversidade, clima organizacional, assim como os níveis de auto-eficácia, necessidades de apoio e satisfação no trabalho dos profissionais, influenciam as suas práticas multiculturais. Os participantes foram 93 profissionais Portugueses, a trabalhar em diferentes tipos de contextos educacionais. Os resultados mostram que a auto-eficácia é um preditor da implementação de práticas multiculturais. Para além disso, um clima organizacional positivo influencia positivamente os sentimentos de eficácia e satisfação no trabalho dos profissionais, apesar de estas variáveis serem afetadas negativamente pelas proporções de crianças de origem cigana e pertencentes a famílias de baixo nível educacional ou de rendimentos. Os resultados mostram também que a auto-eficácia cultural/linguística e a proporção de crianças que falam outra língua que não o Português em casa estão positivamente associadas. Estas evidências destacam a importância de criar e manter um clima organizacional positivo, assim como de auxiliar os profissionais a lidar com a diversidade de forma mais eficaz, nomeadamente fornecendo-lhes condições para melhorarem os seus níveis de auto-eficácia.

Palavras-chave: desvantagem educacional, práticas multiculturais, diversidade, clima organizacional, auto-eficácia, necessidades de apoio, satisfação no trabalho

Abstract

Although educational disadvantage has been a widely researched concept, little is known about its effects on the implementation of multicultural practices by professionals. This way, the current study aims to deepen the understanding regarding that topic, by examining whether the diversity level, organizational climate and professionals' self-efficacy, support needs and job Satisfaction, influence their multicultural practices. Participants were 93 Portuguese professionals, working in diferent types of educational settings. Results show that self-efficacy is a predictor of the implementation of multicultural practices. Furthermore, a positive organizational climate positively influences professionals' sense of efficacy and job satisfaction, despite these variables being negatively affected by roma and lower education/low income proportions. Results also show that cultural/linguistic self-efficacy and language proportion are positively associated. These findings highlight the importance of creating and maintaining a positive organizational climate, while helping professionals handle diversity in a more effective way, namely by providing them conditions to improve their levels of self-efficacy.

Keywords: educational disadvantage, multicultural practices, diversity, organizational climate, self-efficacy, support needs, job satisfaction

Résumé

Même si les handicaps éducatifs sont un sujet très étudié, on connait mal leurs effets sur l'exécution de pratiques multiculturelles par des professionnels dans le milieu de l'éducation. Cette étude a donc pour but d'approfondir la compréhension à ce sujet, en examinant si le niveau de diversité, climat organisationnel, tout comme les niveaux d'auto-efficacité, besoin de soutien et satisfaction au travail des professionnels, influencent leurs pratiques multiculturelles. Les participants choisis furent 93 professionnels Portugais, qui travaillaient dans différents contextes éducationnels. Les résultats ont démontré que l'auto-efficacité est un prédicteur de l'implémentation de pratiques multiculturelles. De plus, un climat organisationnel positif influence favorablement le sentiment d'efficacité et de satisfaction au travail des professionnels, bien que ces variables soient affectées négativement par les proportions d'enfants d'ethnie Rom et membres de familles à un faible niveau d'éducation et/ou de revenus bas. Les résultats démontrent également que l'auto-efficacité culturelle/linguistique et la proportion d'enfants parlant une langue autre que le portugais à la maison sont associées de manière positive. Ces éléments soulignent l'importance de créer et maintenir un climat organisationnel positif, ainsi que la nécessité d'aider les professionnels à gérer la diversité d'une manière plus efficace, en leur offrant de meilleures conditions pour améliorer leur niveau d'auto-efficacité, par exemple.

Mots-clés: handicap scolaire, pratiques multiculturelles, diversité, climat organisationnel, auto-efficacité, besoin de soutien, satisfaction au travail

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List of Abbreviations

ECEC
: Early Childhood Education and Care

MIPEX
: Migrant Integration Policy Index

OECD
: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

TALIS
: Teaching and Learning International Survey

Introduction

This work focuses, primarily, on the concept of educational disadvantage and the ways it affects professionals' implementation of multicultural practices, as well as their sense of self-efficacy, support needs and job satisfaction – while taking into account the institutions' organizational climate.

Educational Disadvantage

Educational disadvantage corresponds to the "impediments to education arising from social or economic disadvantage which prevent students from deriving appropriate benefit from education in schools" (Government of Ireland, 1998, p. 32). According to Kellaghan (2001, p. 5), educational disadvantage exists when, due to several factors in the child's environment – whether regarding economic, cultural and/or social capital –, "the competencies and dispositions which he/she brings to school differ from" those "which are valued in schools and which are required to facilitate adaptation to school and school learning".

So, keeping in mind that this type of inequality means that some groups do not reach their true potential – thus experiencing restricted opportunities in several dimensions of their adult lives (Smyth & McCoy, 2009) –, combating educational disadvantage is crucial, in order to promote fairness and social justice, while also promoting productivity in society (Heckman, 2006).

On average, children from other cultural backgrounds face greater difficulties in education than native students, presenting lower performances in several dimensions (such as reading, mathematics…). Furthermore, their access to quality education is more restricted, they face linguistic barriers and attend to schools with a higher concentration of students from disadvantaged backgrounds (OECD, 2010). In Portugal, the difference between non-immigrant and first-generation immigrant students regarding their sense of belonging – 10.4% – is above the OECD average – 4.6% (OECD, 2017), despite immigrants in this country benefiting from the second "most favourable integration policies in the developed world", according to data from the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX; Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki, & Vankova, 2015).

Parents' lower education and low-income are two risk factors for students' performance, which can be associated, since "students whose parents have higher levels of education and more prestigious and better-paid jobs benefit from accessing a wider range of financial (…) and social resources that make it easier for them to succeed in school", as

opposed to those whose parents "are affected by chronic unemployment, low-paid jobs or poverty" (OECD, 2016, p. 63). In the Portuguese context, the socio-economic status is one of the factors which lead to inequalities in education (OECD, 2016): a low socio-economic status impacts negatively students' cognitive and emotional development (Borges, 2012).

Regarding language diversity, this factor has a negative influence on students' performance, due to them not being able to comprehend or use the language of teaching, while some of them never go to school, knowing their language and identity will not be accepted (Pinnock, 2011). Furthermore, this linguistic disadvantage ends up reflecting certain enduring group conditions – particularly concerning the working class, immigrant populations and ethnic minorities –, which may result in poor school achievement and reduced chances of success in society (Edwards, 2010).

When it comes to educational disadvantage related to roma communities, this population's potential of education is affected by two major forces – housing and employment –, particularly in the current educational system, which reinforces middle-class families' advantages and solidifies hierarchical arrangements, which exist in and out of the school system, thus harming roma children and their educational opportunities, as most of them do not fit this middle-class profile (Themelis, 2009). In Portugal, the existing vision of diversity has been contributing to the persistence of a multicultural blindness, namely at school and in the general society. This way, despite the growing claims, from several groups, regarding their identity's acknowledgment, what tends to happen is the dilution of diversity in one national culture (Pina Almeida, 2006).

As we acknowledge the need to promote equality in education, one of the main issues to discuss is the implementation of multicultural practices by professionals in diverse contexts – which reflects the extent to which these professionals take children's cultural and linguistic differences into account in their practices (Slot, Romijn, Cadima, Nata, & Wysłowska, 2018).

Multicultural Practices

An education which promotes multicultural practices is not specific of any gender or ethnicity; rather, it is a "movement designed to empower all students to become knowledgeable, caring, and active citizens in a deeply troubled and ethnically polarized nation and world" (Banks, 1993a, p. 23).

In terms of what constitutes multicultural education, Banks (1993b) conceptualizes five dimensions: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice

reduction, an equity pedagogy, and an empowering school culture and social structure. Each of these dimensions contributes to a proper implementation of multicultural practices, thus combating educational disadvantage.

Firstly, when it comes to content integration, the integration of ethnically and linguistically diverse content leads to higher levels of student engagement, while also positively influencing intergroups relations between students (Zirkel, 2008), as well as their identity development (Zirkel, 2008; Center, 2005). Furthermore, by strengthening students' connection with their own ethnic group's heritage and culture, the impact of perceived discrimination is buffered and compensated for (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Regarding the knowledge construction process – "an awareness of and focus on the way that cultural frames shape the identification and interpretation of educational content" (Zirkel, 2008, p. 1149) –, Banks (1993a) states that teachers need to make use of their students' and their own cultural knowledge, in order to enrich teaching and learning. This way, Zirkel (2008) defends the possibility that this process has powerful effects on students' intellectual development, since it expands their conceptions of how knowledge is produced and the ways in which different cultural frames shape that same knowledge.

In what concerns prejudice reduction, which refers to "the extent to which the teachers and administrators in a school actively work to reduce prejudice and stereotyping by students in the school" (Zirkel, 2008, p. 1149), multicultural education programs have been found to positively impact students' intergroup attitudes and behaviors (Stephan, Renfro, & Stephan, 2004).

An equity pedagogy – "pedagogies designed specifically to increase the academic achievement of lower performing students and to create greater equity between students" (Zirkel, 2008, p. 1149) – enables students to use their skills in effectively promoting social change, by involving them in the process of knowledge construction and production and helping them become reflective and active citizens (Banks & Banks, 1995).

Finally, the last dimension of multicultural education – an empowering school culture and social structure – "involves conceptualizing the school as the unit of change and making structural changes within the school environment" (Banks, 1993a, p. 27). This dimension helps improve the engagement, learning and achievement of all students, including those who come from different cultural backgrounds (Zirkel, 2008).

Therefore, the implementation of multicultural practices ends up benefiting students, as well as professionals. On one hand, by exposing students to other cultures, tolerance and understanding are promoted (Bianchi, 1999; Tarman & Tarman, 2011); besides, through

considering several viewpoints and communicating effectively in different contexts, students are better prepared for the larger society (Bianchi, 1999). On the other hand, teachers will be more effective if they focus on multicultural teaching and learning, thus gaining their students' trust in the multicultural classroom; also, by encouraging intercultural integration, the path to bridging cultural differences among students is wide open (Alsubaie, 2015).

In sum, multicultural practices are extremely relevant to combat educational disadvantage and, as stated by Sogunro (2001, p. 33), "there is no doubt that a school's unflinching commitment to multicultural education programs will be a significant contribution to today's and tomorrow's pluralistic society and coexistence".

In order to understand the impact of professionals-related variables on their multicultural practices, the following constructs were studied: self-efficacy, support needs and job satisfaction.

Self-efficacy

Teachers' self-efficacy – "teachers' belief in their ability to influence valued student outcomes" (Wheatley, 2005) – is a multidimensional construct (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), with significant implications (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Namely, teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy extend the interpretation regarding their task as a teacher, this way enhancing their teaching commitment (Rots, Aelterman, Devos, & Vlerick, 2010). Furthermore, these teachers are better able to achieve higher student engagement rates – through the utilization of whole class instruction –, even while instructing small groups of students, when compared to low-efficacy teachers (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Efficacy beliefs also influence the type of feedback teachers give to their students, by providing less criticism (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). So, given these implications concerning self-efficacy, it would be expected for this construct to influence professionals' actions with their students, particularly their multicultural practices.

Support Needs

Support needs – related to the areas in which professionals feel they need extra support (Slot et al., 2018) – vary according to the literature, particularly when it comes to teaching in multicultural classrooms. In a study by van Tartwijk, den Brok, Veldman and Wubbels (2009), most teachers' statements highlighted the relevance of providing and enforcing clear procedures, in an unaggressive way. Training is also a relevant component in terms of handling multicultural classes, since teachers need to explore pedagogical

approaches concerning their students' learning needs (Mandoga & Chakandinakira, 2014). However, perhaps the most mentioned requirement for successfully dealing with multiculturalism in classrooms is having a deep understanding of diversity, namely of its role in children's lives, in order to guarantee a more just multicultural environment (Atanasoska, Dimov, & Andonovska-Trajkovs, 2014; Willis & Meacham, 1996). This way, we will try to determine in which areas professionals need more support, and whether the prevalence of needs impacts their multicultural practices.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction – which is generally defined as "the positive or negative evaluative judgement that people make about their job" (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016, p. 293) – is crucial for any success regarding the learning process (Ansah-Hughes, 2016). According to Ainley and Carstens (2018), positive teachers' job satisfaction has a positive impact, not only on teachers, but also on students and schools. Furthermore, while some authors highlight the effects of this construct on productivity – stating that teachers who are satisfied with their job are also productive ones (Usop, Askandar, Langguyuan-Kadtong, & Usop, 2013) –, others mention the importance of teachers' job satisfaction levels in terms of positively influencing educational outcomes (Demirtaş, 2010). The relevance of studying the effects of this variable on professionals' multicultural practices is also explained through the lower levels of job satisfaction that teacher present when working in challenging classroom environments (Jensen, Sandoval-Hernández, Knoll, & Gonzalez, 2012), and through data from a study by Freeman, Brookhart, and Loadman (1999), which stated that beginning teachers in high diversity schools reported lower levels of job satisfaction, when compared with teachers working in low diversity schools. Therefore, our study will try to examine if and how teachers' job satisfaction affects their multicultural practices.

Diversity Level

In terms of student-related risk factors which can contribute to educational disadvantage, this study addresses the following: migrant proportion, lower education/low-income proportion, language diversity and roma proportion. These factors are part of a relevant variable in our study – Institutions' Diversity Level –, which, as we will try to determine, may influence professionals' Multicultural Practices, as well as their levels of Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction.

However, our study will take into account not only these four factors, but also the construct in which they are included – Institutions' Diversity Level –, in order to, as previously mentioned, analyze their effects on professionals' Multicultural Practices and their Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction. With the same goal, this study focuses on one last concept: Organizational Climate.

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate is a construct that has important effects on teaching and learning (Ainley & Carstens, 2018): a positive school climate promotes students' learning abilities and development, group cohesion, cooperative learning, respect, as well as mutual trust. Furthermore, this variable is associated with teacher retention (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013), affecting their "willingness to get involved, their commitment to contribute and their feelings towards themselves and others" (Rapti, 2013, p. 115). If the school climate does not mirror several characteristics – such as respect, safety, fariness, personal dignity –, then students' integration and the establishment of a sense of equality is questioned (Rapti, 2013).

Aims of the study

The present study aims to analyze the relations between 1st Basic Education Institutions' Diversity Level and Organizational Climate, and professionals' levels of Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction.

Furthermore, the study intends to understand how these variables – Diversity Level, Organizational Climate, Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction – impact professionals' Multicultural Practices.

1. Method

1.1. Participants

The sample of the present study consisted of 93 Portuguese professionals, ranging from 23 to 61 years old (M = 43.36, SD = 10.32), with the vast majority of the professionals being female (91.8%).

As it can be seen in Table 1, regarding their education level, according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2012), the majority of the professionals was higher educated, with 55.7% being included in the Short-cycle tertiary education [ISCED 5 – which corresponds to Higher Technical Professional Courses (Conselho Superior de Estatística, 2017)], 30.0% in the Bachelor's or equivalent level (ISCED 6), 10.0% in the Master's or equivalent level (ISCED 7), and 1.4% in the Doctoral or equivalent level (ISCED 8). Therefore, only 1.4% of the professionals were medium educated [ISCED 3 - Secondary Education (Conselho Superior de Estatística, 2017)], while 1.4% were lower educated [ISCED 2 – 3rd cycle of Basic Education (Conselho Superior de Estatística, 2017)].

In terms of types of work setting, the majority of the participants worked in the Social Service area (48.8%), while 41.3% worked in formal education and 10.0% worked in ECEC.

Regarding the participants' types of profession, the majority of them were teachers (56.8%), 15.9% were specialists, 15.9% were social workers and 11.4% were managers. Additionally, all of these professionals worked full-time.

Professionals were working on several institutions; 26 (28%) working on 11 schools, 29 (31%) working on 8 non-profit institutions.

Table 1. Participants' Sociodemographic Characteristics

Variable	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex (N = 73)	Masculine	6	8.2
	Feminine	67	91.8
Nacionality (N = 73)	Portuguese	73	100.0
Country of Birth (N = 71)	Portugal	71	100.0
Home language (N = 70)	Portuguese	70	100.0

Education Level (ISCED) (N = 70)	ISCED 2	1	1.4
	ISCED 3	1	1.4
	ISCED 5	39	55.7
	ISCED 6	21	30.0
	ISCED 7	7	10.0
	ISCED 8	1	1.4
Work Regime (N = 71)	Full-Time	71	100.0
Type of Work Setting (N = 80)	ECEC[a]	8	10.0
	Formal Education	33	41.3
	Social Service	39	48.8
Type of Profession (N = 88)	Teacher[b]	50	56.8
	Specialist[c]	14	15.9
	Manager[d]	10	11.4
	Social Worker[e]	14	15.9
Residence Area (N = 84)	Porto	45	53.6
	Lisbon	39	46.4

[a] Early Childhood Education and Care

[b] A professional who works directly with (groups of) children in an educational or caregiving setting, such as day caregivers, primary school teachers, preschool teachers, teacher assistants, and teachers to be.

[c] A professional with a specific specialized task within the educational or caregiving setting, such as language teachers, remedial teachers, psychologists, pedagogues, specialized coordinators, and coaches.

[d] A professional who is in charge of leading a team or organisation, such as head teachers, principals, team leaders, (assistant) managers, and team or school coordinators.

[e] A professional working in the social work sector that is not listed as teacher, specialist, or manager. This entails professions such as social or community workers, social or cultural brokers, mediators or liaison workers, youth workers, and volunteers (only working in the social work sector; volunteers in ECEC, formal education, and after-school care are excluded in this categories).

Regarding school student composition, Table 2 includes the diversity level of the schools which had professionals involved in this study: 45.5%. Furthermore, it mentions the proportion of migrant (27.0%), lower educated or low-income (94.4%) and roma children (24.7%) at these schools, as well as the proportion of children who, at home, speak another language than Portuguese (18.0%).

1.2. Procedures

In this study, a questionnaire (Slot et al., 2018) was distributed via Internet to professionals working in formal and informal education sectors. Professionals were working within disadvantaged communities including public schools, as well as non-profit institutions – Private Institutions of Social Solidarity and institutions included in "*Programa Escolhas*", a governmental program, which aimed to promote the social inclusion of children and young people from vulnerable backgrounds (Programa Escolhas, s. d.). This distribution occurred through April to July, 2018.

1.3. Measures

From this questionnaire, we used several scales, in order to investigate the challenges associated with reducing inequality and discrimination in Portuguese schools. These scales are described below.

1.3.1. Institution's Diversity Level

This scale was used to assess the diversity of each institution's population, therefore showing the diversity of the context the professionals worked in (Slot et al., 2018). It was a five-point Likert scale, with four items, scored between: 1 (*almost none*), 2 (*around 25%*), 3 (*around 50%*), 4 (*around 75%*) and 5 (*almost all*). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .70, considered a somewhat good value for reliability (Field, 2009a). The items were as follow: Migrant Proportion ("What proportion of children in your organisation is from another cultural background than Portuguese?"), Lower Education/Low Income Proportion ("What proportion of children in your organisation is from lower educated or of low-income parents?"), Language Diversity ("What proportion of children in your organisation speak another language than Portuguese at home?") and Roma Proportion ("What proportion of children in your organisation is from Roma families?").

A composite variable was then computed – "School Diversity" –, which corresponded to the institution's diversity level, by accounting the results from the 4 above mentioned variables: if the school had small proportions (< 50%) of Roma, Migrant, Lower-Education and other-Language, or at most a greater proportion for only one of the indicators, the school would be scored as having low diversity; if the majority (> 50%) of the institution's population was from at least two of the indicators (another cultural background than Portuguese, from lower educated or of low-income parents, spoke another language

than Portuguese at home, and from Roma families), the context would be considered as having high diversity.

1.3.2. Organizational Climate

This scale was used to assess the overall atmosphere of the organization, such as the team cohesion (Slot et al., 2018). It was a five-point Likert scale, with seven items (e.g., *Staff participate in making decisions about things that directly affect them*), scored between: 1 (*disagree*), 2 (*slightly disagree*), 3 (*undecided*), 4 (*slightly agree*) and 5 (*agree*). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .80, considered a good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

1.3.3. Job Satisfaction

This scale was used to assess the professionals' satisfaction with their jobs and, for instance, the extent to which they felt appreciated as professionals (Slot et al., 2018). It was a five-point Likert scale, with six items (e.g., *I find the atmosphere at my work very pleasant*), scored between: 1 (*disagree*), 2 (*slightly disagree*), 3 (*undecided*), 4 (*slightly agree*) and 5 (*agree*). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .75, considered a good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

Originally, the scale consisted of seven items, but one of the items was removed (*My job takes up a lot of my energy*), because the scale's internal consistency would be substantially higher, from .67 to .75.

1.3.4. Support Needs

This scale was designed to assess the areas in which professionals felt they needed extra support (Slot et al., 2018). It was a five-point Likert scale, with seven items, scored between: 1 (*not at all*), 2 (*very little*), 3 (*somewhat*), 4 (*quite a lot*) and 5 (*to a very large degree*).

Preliminary analyses conducted by Slot et al. (2018) suggested two subscales: instrumental and diversity-related. So, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis – in order to understand the structure of this set of variables (Field, 2009b) –, which confirmed the two-factor solution.

"Instrumental Support Needs" consisted of five items, regarding "assistance in performing functional tasks" (Degeneffe & Burcham, 2008, p. 11) – e.g., *extra hands, for example an assistant*. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale was .86, considered a good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

"Diversity-related Support Needs" consisted of two items, regarding the professionals' knowledge of cultural diversity or multilingualism and their needs when dealing with cultural tensions – e.g., *more concrete guidelines to deal with cultural tensions*. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale was .74, considered a somewhat good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

1.3.5. Self-efficacy

This scale was designed to assess the extent to which professionals could perform several competencies (Slot et al., 2018). It was a five-point Likert scale, with seven items, scored between: 1 (*not at all*), 2 (*very little*), 3 (*somewhat*), 4 (*quite well*) and 5 (*to a very large degree*).

Based on the two-factor model proposed by Slot et al. (2018, p. 71) – who conducted an exploratory factor analysis, in order to "reach the most optimal grouping of items into subscales for the total sample of professionals across countries" –, two subscales were used: "General Self-efficacy" and "Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy".

"General Self-efficacy" consisted of five items, regarding "professionals' general sense of capability to deal with situations, such as making contact with challenging children" (Slot et al., 2018, p. 98) – e.g., *to what extent can you intervene when disturbing behaviour occurs in your group*. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale was .93, considered a very good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

"Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy" consisted of two items, regarding "professionals' sense of capability to work with children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds" (Slot et al., 2018, p. 98) – e.g., *to what extent can you work with children from diverse cultural backgrounds*. Cronbach's alpha for this subscale was .85, considered a good value for reliability (Field, 2009a).

1.3.6. Multicultural Practices

This scale was used to assess "the extent to which professionals take (cultural and linguistic) differences of children into account in their practices" (Slot et al., 2018, p. 39). It was a five-point Likert scale, with eleven items (e.g., *I create a warm and inclusive environment for children from different backgrounds*), scored between: 1 (*never*), 2 (*sometimes*), 3 (*regularly*), 4 (*often*) and 5 (*always*). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .81, considered a good value for reliability (Field, 2009 - Reliability analysis).

Originally, the scale consisted of twelve items. However, due to one of the items having a low correlation with the scale (-.005), such item was eliminated.

1.4. Data analysis

We first examined the descriptive statistics for all the study variables. Then, to understand the associations among all the variables of interest, correlations were computed.

Finally, after checking the normality of our data's distribution and analyzing outliers, we conducted multiple linear regression analysis, using the Enter Method (also called Forced Entry) – which means all predictors were forced into the model simultaneously (Field, 2009c) –, with the objective of determining the effects of: a) Diversity Level and Organizational Climate on professionals' Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction, and b) Diversity Level, Organizational Climate, Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction on professionals' Multicultural Practices.

2. Results

2.1. Descriptives

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics for diversity level, organizational climate, self-efficacy, support needs, job satisfaction and multicultural practices. As we can see, 45.5% of the schools which participated in this study were considered as having high diversity, due to the fact of presenting at least two out of the four diversity level's indicators. Between these, the lowest score corresponded to the language diversity – only 18.0% of the schools included children who spoke another language than Portuguese at home; roma proportion and migrant proportion had similar scores (24.7% and 27.0%, respectively); finally, lower education/low income proportion presented a very high result – 94.4% –, which means that 94.4% of the schools included a high proportion of children who were from lower-educated or of low-income parents. When it comes to the other variables, the highest score corresponded to the job satisfaction variable (M = 4.10, SD = .60), followed by the organizational climate variable (M = 3.81, SD = .79). Multicultural practices were in the medium range (M = 3.52, SD = .79), as well as the self-efficacy and support needs variables. However, in terms of self-efficacy, general self-efficacy presented a higher value than cultural/linguistic self-efficacy, M = 3.66, SD = .88, and M = 3.36, SD = .91, t (68) = 4.597, p < .001. Finally, in terms of support needs, although both variables presented medium values, the professionals reported slightly higher needs for instrumental support, M = 3.38, SD = 1.06, when compared to diversity-related one, M = 3.27, SD = 1.03.

Table 2. Variables – Descriptive Statistics

Variables	*%*	*M*	*SD*	*Min.*	*Max.*
Diversity Level	45.5				
Migrant Proportion	27.0				
Lower Education/Low Income Proportion	94.4				
Language Diversity	18.0				
Roma Proportion	24.7				
Organizational Climate		3.81	.79	1.86	5.00
General Self-efficacy		3.66	.88	1.00	5.00
Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy		3.36	.91	1.00	5.00
Diversity-related Support Needs		3.27	1.03	1.00	5.00

Instrumental Support Needs	3.38	1.06	1.00	5.00
Job Satisfaction	4.10	.60	2.83	5.00
Multicultural Practices	3.52	.79	1.55	4.82

2.2. Correlations

Table 3 presents the correlations between Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction. As shown in this table, there were several statistically significant correlations between some variables. Results show that General Self-efficacy was positively associated with Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, $r = .815$, $p < .001$, Instrumental Support Needs, $r = .267$, $p = .028$, and Job Satisfaction, $r = .279$, $p = .020$. Furthermore, Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy was positively associated with Job Satisfaction, $r = .259$, $p = .032$. Finally, Diversity-related Support Needs was positively associated with Instrumental Support Needs, $r = .397$, $p = .001$.

Table 3. Pearson Coefficient Correlations between Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction

Variables	General Self-efficacy	Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy	Diversity-related Support Needs	Instrumental Support Needs	Job Satisfaction
General Self-efficacy	—	.815**	.011	.267*	.279*
Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy		—	.080	.205	.259*
Diversity related Support Needs			—	.397**	.048
Instrumental Support Needs				—	-.007
Job Satisfaction					—

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 4 presents the correlations between Organizational Climate, Diversity Level and Self-efficacy, Support Needs, Job Satisfaction. As we can see, Organizational Climate was positively associated with General Self-efficacy, $r = .267$, $p = .027$, Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, $r = .244$, $p = .043$, and Job Satisfaction, $r = .554$, $p < .001$. Although the Diversity Level was not associated with any variable, two of its indicators were: Lower Education/Low Income Proportion was negatively associated with Job Satisfaction, r = -

.252, p = .025, while Language Diversity was positively associated with Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, r = .280, p = .022.

Table 4. Pearson Coefficient Correlations between Organizational Climate, Diversity Level and Self-efficacy, Support Needs, Job Satisfaction

Variables	Organizational Climate	Diversity Level	Migrant Proportion	Lower Education/Low Income Proportion	Language Diversity	Roma Proportion
General Self-efficacy	.267*	-.139	-.088	.008	.143	-.232
Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy	.244*	-.051	.037	-.069	.280*	-.140
Diversity related Support Needs	.013	.154	.205	.090	.161	.035
Instrumental Support Needs	-.069	-.221	-.146	-.053	-.047	-.159
Job Satisfaction	.554**	-.087	-.030	-.252*	-.024	-.197

*p < .05; **p < .01

Table 5 presents the correlations between Multicultural Practices and Self-efficacy, Support Needs, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Climate, Diversity Level. This table shows positive associations between Multicultural Practices and General Self-efficacy, r = .504, p < .001, and Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, r = .366, p = .013. However, Multicultural Practices were negatively associated with Migrant Proportion, r = -.378, p = .010.

Table 5. Pearson Coefficient Correlations between Multicultural Practices and Self-efficacy, Support Needs, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Climate, Diversity Level

Variables	Multicultural Practices
Diversity Level	-.240
Migrant Proportion	-.378**
Lower Education/Low Income Proportion	-.164
Language Proportion	-.099
Roma Proportion	-.152
Organizational Climate	-.038

General Self-efficacy	.504**
Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy	.366*
Diversity related Support Needs	.006
Instrumental Support Needs	.195
Job Satisfaction	.160

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

2.3. Regression analysis

A series of regression analysis were performed, predicting Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction from Organizational Climate and School Diversity, and, finally, predicting Multicultural Practices from Organizational Climate, School Diversity, Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction.

Predicting Self-efficacy

Table 6 presents the regression analysis predicting General Self-efficacy. A multiple regression was carried out, in order to investigate whether Organizational Climate and Roma Proportion could significantly predict professionals' General Self-efficacy. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 15.2% of the variance ($R^2 = .152$) and was statistically significant, $F(2, 63) = 5.667$, $p = .005$. Organizational Climate and Roma Proportion contributed significantly to the model, $\beta = .264$, $p = .027$, and $\beta = -.270$, $p = .024$. This way, while Organizational Climate was a positive predictor of General Self-efficacy, Roma Proportion was a negative predictor of this same variable.

Table 6. Regression Analysis Predicting General Self-efficacy

	General Self-efficacy			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
Variables	R^2	*B*	*SE B*	β
1. (Constant)	.152**	2.938	.429	
Organizational Climate		.248	.109	.264*
Roma Proportion		-.453	.195	-.270*

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 7 presents the regression analysis predicting Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy. A multiple regression was carried out, in order to investigate whether Organizational Climate and Language Proportion could significantly predict professionals' Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 14.4% of the variance (R^2 = .144) and was statistically significant, $F(2, 64) = 5.382$, p = .007. Organizational Climate and Language Proportion contributed positively to the model, β = .257, p = .030; β = .295, p = .013.

Table 7. Regression Analysis Predicting Cultural/linguistic Self-Efficacy

	Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
Variables	R^2	*B*	*SE B*	β
1. (Constant)	.057†	2.469	.492	
Organizational Climate		.252	.127	.239†
2. (Constant)	.144**	2.283	.478	
Organizational Climate		.271	.122	.257*
Language Proportion		.632	.248	.295*

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Predicting Job Satisfaction

Table 8 presents the regression analysis predicting Job Satisfaction. A multiple regression was carried out, in order to investigate whether Organizational Climate and Lower Education/Low Income Proportion could significantly predict professionals' Job Satisfaction. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 37.0% of the variance (R^2 = .370) and was statistically significant, $F(2, 75) = 22.037$, $p < .001$. Organizational Climate and Lower Education/Low Income Proportion contributed significantly to the model, β = .559, $p < .001$, and β = -.187, p = .046.

Table 8. Regression Analysis Predicting Job Satisfaction

	Job Satisfaction			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
Variables	R^2	*B*	*SE B*	β
1. (Constant)	.370**	2.988	.414	
Organizational Climate		.436	.072	.559**
Lower Education/Low Income Proportion		-.586	.288	-.187*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$

Predicting Multicultural Practices

Table 9 presents the regression analysis predicting Multicultural Practices. In the first step, a multiple regression was carried out, in order to investigate whether Organizational Climate, Lower Education/Low Income Proportion, Language Proportion and Roma Proportion could significantly predict professionals' Multicultural Practices. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 4.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .044$) and was not statistically significant, $F(4, 39) = .443$, $p = .776$. Organizational Climate and Lower Education/Low Income Proportion did not contribute significantly to the model, $\beta = -.067$, $p = .687$, and $\beta = -.117$, $p = .470$; the same happened with Language Proportion and Roma Proportion, $\beta = -.123$, $p = .465$, and $\beta = -.105$, $p = .512$. In the second step, a multiple regression was carried out, in order to investigate whether Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction could significantly predict professionals' Multicultural Practices. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 30.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .304$) and was statistically significant, $F(5, 38) = 3.321$, $p = .014$. General Self-efficacy contributed significantly to the model, $\beta = .483$, $p = .019$; however, the remaining variables did not – Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, $\beta = -.047$, $p = .813$, Diversity related Support Needs, $\beta = -.105$, $p = .521$, Instrumental Support Needs, $\beta = .285$, $p = .100$, and Job Satisfaction $\beta = .138$, $p = .339$.

Table 9. Regression Analysis Predicting Multicultural Practices

	Multicultural Practices			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
Variables	R^2	*B*	*SE B*	β
1. (Constant)	.044	4.218	.810	
Organizational Climate		-.064	.157	-.067
Lower Education/Low Income Proportion		-.356	.488	-.117
Language Proportion		-.258	.350	-.123
Roma Proportion		-.209	.316	-.105
2. (Constant)	.304*	.210	1.123	
General Self-efficacy		.514	.209	.483*
Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy		-.046	.192	-.047
Diversity related Support Needs		-.076	.117	-.105
Instrumental Support Needs		.232	.137	.285
Job Satisfaction		.196	.203	.138

* $p < .05$

3. Discussion

The present study examined the relations between the level of diversity and Organizational Climate of several 1st Basic Education Institutions, and their professionals' Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction. This study also intended to analyze the impact of these variables – Diversity Level, Organizational Climate, Self-efficacy, Support Needs and Job Satisfaction – on the professionals' Multicultural Practices.

Self-efficacy

Firstly, we found that Organizational Climate and Roma Proportion were significant predictors of professionals' General Self-efficacy. According to our data, this means that Organizational Climate can positively influence General Self-efficacy, which is in line with previous research. For example, Tobin, Muller and Turner (2006) found that Organizational Climate contributed moderately to teacher self-efficacy. When it comes to specific components of Organizational Climate, this influence is still observed: some authors concluded that one of the best predictors of teachers' sense of efficacy was the lack of obstacles to teaching (Moore & Esselman, 1994; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995), while others focused on the association between self-efficacy and professionals' decision-making influence – providing greater opportunity for them to play an active role in making instructional and curricular decisions (Moore & Esselman, 1994; Guo, Justice, Sawyer, & Tompkins, 2011). Furthermore, several studies highlighted the importance of affiliation – "the extent to which teachers can obtain assistance, advice and encouragement and feel accepted by colleagues" (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016, p. 302). Aldridge and Fraser (2016) revealed that affiliation (namely, allowing professionals to share ideas and practices with their colleagues) significantly influenced teachers' self-efficacy, while Guo et al. (2011) argued that teachers may potentially benefit from working in environments where they felt connected to their colleagues – an idea previously defended by Hoy and Woolfolk (1993). According to these authors, another relevant component of organizational climate is the institutional integrity – "a school's ability to cope with its environment in a way that maintains the educational integrity of its programs" –, which had significant effects on teachers' efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993, p. 358). Despite this evidence in favor of our results, not all studies showed the existence of Organizational Climate's influence over professionals' General Self-efficacy: for example, Tobin et al. (2006) found that organizational climate was not a useful predictor of teaching efficacy, thus suggesting the need for schools to widen their activities beyond climate. In terms of Roma Proportion, we

found that professionals felt less efficacious in their work when the proportion of children from Roma families was higher. This effect was expected, based on the premise that, generally, teachers hold biased expectations of minority students (namely, more negative expectations, as well as more negative referrals, when compared to majority students), resulting in achievement differences between ethnic minority students and ethnic majority students (Tennenbaum & Ruck, 2007; van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010), which could potentially decrease professionals' sense of efficacy. Besides, this effect can be explained through the results of a recent study by Geerlings, Thijs and Verkuyten (2018), which showed that teachers tend to experience less self-efficacy with ethnic minority students, compared to majority students, particularly when they perceive students' strong internalizing problems. However, in this same study (Geerlings et al., 2018), the authors found that, in classrooms with a lower proportion of ethnic minority students, teachers felt less self-efficacious in teaching those students, while, in highly diverse classrooms, teachers felt more self-efficacious – which was explained through the possibility that teachers perceived themselves as more self-efficacious in teaching minority students when they had more experiences with children from different cultural backgrounds. This way, it seems that it would be beneficial, for both students and teachers, to distribute ethnic minority students in a way that it creates schools with adequate levels of diversity.

Furthermore, our results also showed that Organizational Climate and Language Proportion were significant predictors of professionals' Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy, which means that both of these variables can positively influence Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy. Organizational Climate influencing Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy has been reported by Weisel and Dror (2006), who found high correlations between several aspects of school climate and aspects of sense of efficacy. According to these authors, professionals exhibiting high levels of self-efficacy, while being employed in contexts which present supportive leadership, and encourage autonomy and renovation, demonstrate more positive attitudes regarding inclusion (Weisel & Dror, 2006). Furthermore, Avery and McKay (2010) mentioned some strategies to promote an effective diversity management, such as allowing and encouraging all professionals to participate in organizational processes, as well as recognizing and rewarding them equitably for their contributions. This shows the important influence that organizational climate can have over professionals' sense of -efficacy, which can also be demonstrated through the role of diversity training in employees' self-efficacy, leading to significant increases in their diversity self-efficacy (Combs & Luthans, 2007). In terms of Language Proportion positively influencing Cultural/linguistic Self-efficacy,

previous studies support this finding, claiming that experience with different populations – namely, linguistic minority children – is associated with positive language attitudes (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997; Flores, Desjean-Perrotta, & Steinmetz, 2004). However, these positive attitudes do not arise by intergroup contact alone (Tajfel, 1982), since "teachers need to have resources at their disposal to effectively work with language-minority children" (Byrnes et al., 1997, p. 642). Furthermore, it is important for professionals working with language-minority children to have cultural and linguistic knowledge, in order to overcome their "pedagogic uncertainties" (Haworth, 2008) and to promote their sense of efficacy (Flores et al., 2004).

Job Satisfaction

Regarding Job Satisfaction, our results showed that this variable was significantly predicted by the institutions' Organizational Climate and Lower Education/Low Income Proportion: while it was positively influenced by the Organizational Climate, it was negatively influenced by the Lower Education/Low Income Proportion. Concerning the positive association between Organizational Climate and Job Satisfaction, this finding is supported by several previous studies (e.g., Taylor & Tashakkori, 1994; Xiaofu & Qiwen, 2007; Malinen & Savolainen, 2016). However, the literature tends to focus on the importance of specific organizational climate components. Affiliation is one of those components, influencing job satisfaction indirectly (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016); in fact, teachers' perceptions of professional community and teacher collaboration have been shown to influence significantly their levels of Job Satisfaction, while perceptions of professional community moderate the impact of the teacher ethno-racial group and the ethno-racial composition of the classroom on teachers' job satisfaction (Stearns, Banerjee, Mickelson, & Moller, 2014). Furthermore, principal leadership (related to the principal's role in the school) and faculty collegiality (which includes the teachers' perception of professional support given by their colleagues) were found to be strongly associated with teachers' feelings of job satisfaction (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1994). Finally, according to the TALIS 2013 international report (OECD, 2014), decision-making – providing teachers opportunities to make decisions at a school level – is crucial in terms of improving the levels of job satisfaction. Besides, appraisal and feedback are also valued aspects by the teachers, since "teachers' perception that appraisal and feedback leads to changes in their teaching practice is related to higher job satisfaction" (OECD, 2014, p. 201). Despite this body of evidence, not all data reveals the same findings, which happened in a study by Skaalvik and Skaalvik

(2011), who found no strong relation between teachers' perception of the school climate and their levels of job satisfaction". In terms of Lower Education/Low Income Proportion negatively influencing professionals' Job Satisfaction, this was expected, due to several findings from previous studies. For example, Chamundeswari (2013) found that teachers working in central board schools – where, among other factors, parents' socio-economic status is significantly better than in state and matriculation boards –, presented higher levels of job satisfaction. Besides, as stated in a study by Kushman (1992), since educational uncertainty, in disadvantaged schools, is inherently high, this affects teachers' sense of control, which can, in turn, influence their job satisfaction: teachers' high sense of control over the learning process positively impacts their sense of efficacy, which allows them to find solutions to students' learning difficulties and, consequently, experiencing more success in the classroom and, finally, promoting greater satisfaction with teaching. However, while studying the job satisfaction of beginning teachers, Morgan and O'Leary (2004) found no differences, regarding their level of satisfaction, between teachers working in schools serving disadvantaged communities and teachers working in other schools.

Support Needs

In what concerns professionals' support needs related to the students' diversity level, some authors highlight the importance of teachers examining their own backgrounds and becoming aware of the influence of several factors, such as gender, race, class and culture (Leavy, 2005; Yuen, 2010), while also working to improve the quality of their pedagogical strategies, in order to support the learning of all students (Florian, Young, & Rouse, 2010). Furthermore, in terms of impacting professionals' diversity beliefs, Causey, Thomas and Armento (2000) mention the relevance of field experiences in diverse contexts, as well as providing teachers opportunities for self-analysis, reflection and discourse, in relation to equity issues. So, given the challenges faced by professionals regarding students' diversity, a positive association between the diversity level and support needs was expected. However, no statistically significant association concerning these two variables was found.

In respect to a possible association between organizational climate and professionals' support needs, given the effects of a positive organizational climate on teachers' retention (Thapa et al., 2013), commitment to teaching (Rapti, 2013) and sense of efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Moore & Esselman, 1994; Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995; Tobin et al., 2006; Guo et al., 2011; Aldridge & Fraser, 2016), it was expected that this construct would negatively influence professionals' Support Needs: the more positive the school climate, the

less support needs reported by professionals. However, our study did not find any statistically significant association regarding these variables.

Multicultural Practices

According to our data, General Self-efficacy was a significant predictor of professionals' Multicultural Practices, positively influencing them. This result highlights the importance of professionals' perceptions of self-efficacy in terms of effectively implementing multicultural education programs (Yildirim & Tezci, 2016). Despite the shortage of research investigating the link between teachers' self-efficacy and multicultural practices (Gorski, Davis, & Reiter, 2012; Geerlings, Thijs, & Verkuyten, 2018), some authors have looked into this relation and have come up with evidence which supports our findings. Namely, they found that efficacy influences the effort professionals invest in teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001); furthermore, professionals with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to try diverse ways of teaching (Allinder, 1994), to reflect on their practices (Yerrick & Hoving, 2003) and to resolve cultural conflicts involving students (Siwatu & Starker, 2010).

Regarding the relation between Support Needs and Multicultural Practices, unfortunately, to our knowledge, no studies explored the relation between professionals' support needs and the implementation of multicultural practices: this way, based on the literature, we were not sure what to expect, in terms of a possible association concerning these variables. However, we hypothesized that professionals reporting less support needs would more effectively implement multicultural practices, and vice versa. Despite this assumption, our study found no statistically significant association between support needs and multicultural practices.

Concerning the relation between Job Satisfaction and Multicultural Practices, given that job satisfaction is extremely relevant for any success in the learning process (Ansah-Hughes, 2016), positively impacting teachers' performance (Demirtaş, 2010; Usop, Askandar, Langguyuan-Kadtong, & Usop, 2013; Ainley & Carstens, 2018), it was expected that these variables would be positively associated: the greater the levels of job satisfaction, the more effective the implementation of multicultural practices. However, our study did not find any statistically significant association between these variables.

In what concerns the association between schools' Diversity Level and Multicultural Practices, teachers' sense of efficacy is greater in highly diverse classrooms, as opposed to what happens in lowly diverse classrooms (Geerlings et al., 2018); and, given that higher

levels of self-efficacy influence teachers' efforts in teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), as well as their willingness to try different ways of teaching (Allinder, 1994) and their ability to resolve cultural conflicts between students (Siwatu & Starker, 2010), we were expecting to find a positive relation between schools' diversity level and professionals' multicultural practices. However, no statistically significant association was found between these variables.

Finally, regarding the relation between Organizational Climate and Multicultural Practices, we expected to find a positive association between these variables, due to the fact that a positive school climate positively influences teaching and learning (Ainley & Carstens, 2018), promoting group cohesion, as well as cooperative learning, respect and mutual trust (Thapa et al., 2013). Furthermore, a positive organizational climate affects professionals' commitment to teaching and is crucial in terms of establishing a sense of equality (Rapti, 2013). However, our study did not find any statistically significant association between organizational climate and professionals' multicultural practices.

Possible reasons for the lack of associations are the low statistical power, given the small sample size. But it is also possible that general working conditions or school diversity are associated with multicultural practices through multiple pathways, making it difficult to single out the effect of each one.

Study Limitations and Considerations for Future Research

The findings of this study have to be seen in light of some limitations, which could be addressed in future research.

The first limitation concerns the number of participants who did not have valid responses when asked about the implementation of Multicultural Practices – a key variable of this study –, since only 47 valid responses were reported. This limitation could have made it more difficult to find significant associations from the data, while potentially compromising the generalization of the results to a larger population. In future studies, this risk should be taken into account and, eventually, prevented, by including a larger sample.

Another limitation was the lack of prior research studies on some of this study's topics. This was verified, particularly, regarding the relations between Multicultural Practices and Support Needs, Job Satisfaction and Diversity Level. This limitation affected some of our understanding of the research problem, since we did not know how several variables could interact with each other, based on the literature. It would be important to

expand the research scope concerning multicultural practices, by focusing on possible associations between this variable and others which are professional-related.

Furthermore, in this study, the participants worked in different types of settings (e.g., ECEC, social service) and their professions were diverse (e.g., teacher, specialist). However, the literature related to the studied variables focused mostly on teachers. Consequently, the generalization of the results to participants with other types of professions was compromised. It would be relevant for future studies to deepen the research concerning the implementation of multicultural practices by these professionals.

Finally, keeping in mind that the measure used in this study was a self-report questionnaire, several sources of bias could have prevailed (such as recall bias or social desirability), potentially affecting the data's reliability.

4. Conclusions

Despite the present study's limitations, our findings contribute to highlighting the importance of creating and maintaining a positive organizational climate, by suggesting that it positively influences professionals' sense of efficacy and job satisfaction. Besides, this study also stresses the relevance of helping professionals handle diversity in a more effective way, since we found that their levels of self-efficacy and job satisfaction are negatively affected by roma and lower education/low income proportions. However, due to the fact that language proportion and cultural/linguistic self-efficacy are positively associated, it would be meaningful to expose professionals to highly diverse contexts. Furthermore, this study reveals the value of improving professionals' self-efficacy, in order to promote an effective implementation of multicultural practices.

In sum, educational disadvantage is a phenomenon that should be addressed; to do so, we must take some of its factors into account and acknowledge the way they interact with professional-related variables and, consequently, if and how these professionals implement multicultural practices when confronted with diversity.

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